

Lincoln's 2004 Community Development Week Award

Requirements:

- Must be within the City limits,
- Must have used some amount of government funds,
- Must be a physical improvement that was completed in 2003,
- Must NOT have received the CD Week Award previously. CAN have been nominated previously.

Criteria that will be considered for selection of the winner(s):

- Size and scale of the project – any size of project may be nominated.
- The impact the project had on the community – both level and duration.
- Innovation, willingness to find new ways to accomplish the project.
- Efficient use of limited government funds, leveraging other resources.
- Neighborhood / community / citizen support and involvement.

Parrish Building Facade Improvement

Describe the project.

The Parrish Building Facade Improvement, at 1400 O Street, included new paint that accentuates the building's architectural details and completely rebuilt canopies, all thanks to new owners who are dedicated to a vital downtown.

Nominated by:

Polly McMullen, Downtown Lincoln Association
434-6900, pmcmullen@downlincoln.org

Other Contacts:

*Troy Gagner, 441-7862, tgagner@ci.lincoln.ne.us
Michael Korsakas, 421-2483, sakasrok@aol.com
Jim Stevens, 465-9142, JimattheOzone@aol.com*

Who was involved, participated? What did they do?

The groundwork for improving the Parrish Building really began when the businesses occupants formed a partnership, **Parrish Project, LLC**, to purchase the building. When negotiations with the previous owner made it necessary for a property appraisal, the Downtown Lincoln Association helped cover that unexpected cost. Once they owned the building, the Parrish Project partners worked with UNL Architectural Department students to design the new painting scheme for the building. The partners then used the City Urban Development Department's Facade Improvement Program to assist with the painting and canopy repair. Eventually the partners hope to do more with the building; perhaps housing on the second floor, or perhaps removal of the large, old roof-mounted billboard which they inherited with the building.

Total \$ amount spent on project? Government \$\$ spent on project?

Total cost of the facade improvements was about \$62,000. About half came from Urban Development's Facade Improvement Program which is in turn funded through Lincoln's Community Development Block Grant. The remaining funding came from the Parrish Project partnership.

What other resources made the project possible? Funds? Materials? Labor?

Without Downtown Lincoln Association's assistance on the appraisal, the Parrish Project partners may never have been able to purchase the building.

UNL Architectural Department students contributed their time and talent to the design of the painting scheme on the building's facade.

Who benefitted?

The business-occupant partners of Parrish Project, LLC benefitted through having an attractive and highly visible place of business. Downtown benefitted in several ways; the improvements:

- helped maintain the viability of a highly visible corner of downtown,
- made it possible for several small, proprietor-owned businesses stay downtown.
- added richness to the downtown experience by accenting architectural character and details

What was innovative about the project?

In downtown Lincoln, it is unusual for business occupants to band together to purchase their building. It shows commitment to each other, the building, and to downtown Lincoln.

3rd and A Street Overpass

Describe the project.

3rd and A Street Overpass is located on A Street between 1st and 5th Streets. The Overpass removed many of the rail-vehicular-pedestrian conflicts that had long existed in the area. The old A Street right of way will continue to exist as an access road for residences on the north side of the overpass.

Nominated by:

Bill Vocasek, West A Neighborhood Association
477-5753 x 8241, bvocasek@neb.rr.com

Other Contacts:

Wynn Hjermstad, 441-8211, whjermstad@ci.lincoln.ne.us
Roger Figard, 441-7567, rfigard@ci.lincoln.ne.us

Who was involved, participated? What did they do?

The 3rd and A Street Overpass is the largest element of an extensive effort to minimize the impact of double railroad tracks on 3rd Street. The Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD), the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroad companies, the residents and members of the South Salt Creek and West A Neighborhood Associations, City staff from Public Works and Urban Development, and area property owners were all included in a Partnering Group that determined what needed to be done along the double tracks to improve safety and strengthen the surrounding residential area. Most of the elements on that long list have been completed: a pedestrian underpass at 3rd and F Streets, paving 3rd Street east of the tracks and the adjacent alleys, landscaping 3rd Street between the railroad tracks and paved street, removal of railroad tracks from 4th Street, closure of less heavily used street/railroad intersections along 3rd Street, improvement of the D Street intersection, paving and improvement of 4th Street*, and construction of an A Street overpass.

*In design stage.

Total \$ amount spent on project? Government \$s spent on project?

Total project cost for the overpass was about \$10 million. RTSD provided most of the funds, with some additional funds from Burlington Northern Santa Fe, and the State of Nebraska.

What other resources made the project possible? Funds? Materials? Labor?

In kind from the City of Lincoln was provided in the form of co-management of the project by the Public Works and Urban Development Departments.

Who benefitted?

Community safety for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic was greatly improved by eliminating a very busy at grade crossing.

Neighborhood selected the alignment of the overpass because it did more than improve traffic. It:

- acts as a buffer between residential uses north of A Street and industrial / commercial uses to the south,
- incorporates architectural elements and extensive landscaping, and
- includes a 10 ft wide bike and pedestrian way as part of the overpass.

What was innovative about the project?

Historically, area residents had felt disenfranchised in discussions with railroad and RTSD officials. As a result, the willingness of BN Santa Fe and the RTSD to listen to input from individual property owners, neighborhood groups, and local businesses was greatly appreciated. Working together, a design was developed that would successfully fit in with the neighborhood's historic character. As a result, the 3rd and A Street Overpass is not only accepted by the surrounding established neighborhoods, but actually claimed, proudly, as their own.

Eagles View Park

Describe the project.

Eagles View Park, 5301 W. Knight Drive, is a new neighborhood park serving Arnold Heights Neighborhood residents. The project included a new playground, a drinking fountain, trees and landscaping, sidewalks and a picnic/seating area.

Nominated by:

Jeff Schwebke, Arnold Heights Neighborhood Association
479-4229, jeff_schwebke@duncanaviation.com

Other Contacts:

*Bradd, 441-7856, bschmeichel@ci.lincoln.ne.us,
Lyn Johnson – ljohnson@ci.lincoln.ne.us and
Beverly Fleming from LHA?*

Who was involved, participated? What did they do?

The Lincoln Housing Authority (LHA) donated land directly south of Arnold Heights Elementary School to the City for a neighborhood park. The Arnold Heights Neighborhood Association worked with City Parks and Recreation Department through all phases of the park's development, from design to installation and maintenance.

Total \$ amount spent on project? Government \$s spent on project?

The total budget for the park was \$62,000. Funds came from:

LHA	\$32,000 and the donation of the land
Urban Development	\$18,000 (from CDBG funds)
Parks & Recreation	\$12,000

What other resources made the project possible? Funds? Materials? Labor?

Members of the Arnold Heights Neighborhood Association helped install playground equipment, benches, and picnic tables. They helped plant the trees and maintain the landscaping, especially keeping new plant materials watered. Neighborhood association members were the glue that held the project together and kept it coordinated and on track, participating in the park design, construction and maintenance.

Eagle Scouts, as part of a merit badge project, helped install the benches and bike rack as well as plant and water the trees.

Who benefitted?

The neighborhood now has improved recreation facilities for area children. Parks and Recreation classifies Eagles View Park as a neighborhood park, which means that it serves residents from approximately one square mile.

What was innovative about the project?

The extremely active involvement of the Arnold Heights Neighborhood Association was above the ordinary level of neighborhood involvement. And, while not unusual in Lincoln, the close collaboration between the local housing authority and city departments needs to be recognized.

Charleston Street Ornamental Lighting

Describe the project. Name of project?

Charleston Street Ornamental Lighting Project, on Charleston Street, between 7th and 10th Streets. Installation of ornamental lighting on Charleston Street was identified by the North Bottoms Neighborhood Association in their Focus Area Plan as one of their top priorities for the neighborhood.

Nominated by:

Ed Caudill, North Bottoms Neighborhood
475-4950 edcaudill@juno.com

Other Contacts:

Bradd Schmeichel, 441-7856

Larry Kathol, LES, 467-7642

Scott Opfer, Public Works, 441-7851

Who was involved, participated? What did they do?

The Focus Area Committee of the North Bottoms Neighborhood Association identified the need for additional lighting along Charleston Street. Since neighborhood is an historic area, the neighborhood association wanted the nature of additional lighting to complement that history. Erickson Sullivan Architects worked closely with neighborhood association members to develop the design of the lights. Then they worked closely with Lincoln Electric System and Public Works to hammer out specifics, such as wattage, type of light bulb, and placement. Progressive Electric installed the lights in June, 2004. Urban Development Department funded the project as part of implementation of the North Bottoms Focus Area Plan.

Total \$ amount spent on project? Government \$\$ spent on project?

The total project budget was \$110,000. All funding was through the city's Community Development Block Grant program, administered by Urban Development Department.

What other resources made the project possible? Funds? Materials? Labor?

Neighborhood association members worked diligently to develop the focus area plan, including the strategy of adding ornamental lighting along Charleston Street. When the lighting needed to be designed, neighborhood association representatives worked with the architects to develop a design that complimented the historic nature of the neighborhood.

Who benefitted?

Additional lighting increased pedestrian safety, both for neighborhood residents and the many exercise enthusiasts who use that street to access to Oak Lake hiking and biking paths. The attractive lighting design complements the historic nature of the neighborhood and presents an attractive neighborhood "face" to vehicular traffic as well.

What was innovative about the project?

NA

Lincoln Free to Grow

Describe the project.

Lincoln Free to Grow's target area is the Clinton Neighborhood (Census Tract 4) and it's neighborhood revitalization work is currently focusing on a core area between Holdrege and Dudley Streets, 24th and 26th Streets – an area that includes slightly more than 90 houses. Nationally, Free To Grow programs focus on community partnerships that promote substance-free, safe neighborhoods. Lincoln Free To Grow focuses on improving the neighborhood environment vs. more common prevention efforts that focus on changing the behavior of individuals. So far, the physical outcomes of their efforts in Clinton have included control of overgrown vegetation, elimination of graffiti, and proactive neighborhood clean-ups.

Nominated by:

Renee Malone, Clinton Neighborhood Association
437-1737, Remalone36@aol.com

Other Contacts:

Ernie Castillo, 441-7855, ecastillo@ci.lincoln.ne.us
Shawn Ryba, Lincoln Action Program, 471-4515
Kathy Stokes, Lincoln Action Program, 471-4515
Pat Anderson, 617-1580

Who was involved, participated? What did they do?

Lincoln Free to Grow neighborhood revitalization is being implemented by a core team that includes representatives of the Clinton Neighborhood Organization, staff from City of Lincoln Departments (Police, Building & Safety, Health, and Urban Development), Neighborhoods, Inc. and Lincoln Action Program Head Start .

Physical aspects of the project have included two neighborhood clean-ups and two graffiti clean-ups. The clean-ups were pursued with door-to-door neighbor contact and assistance. Sixty-six property owners, homeowners and renters participated. Over 16 tons of debris were removed. The graffiti clean-ups involved neighborhood residents and volunteers from all ages and backgrounds.

Non-physical aspects of the project have included activities that helped neighbors meet neighbors, establishment of Neighborhood Watch groups, increased housing and health code enforcement, and increased police community involvement.

Total \$ amount spent on project? Government \$\$ spent on project?

Lincoln Free to Grow funding includes the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (\$35,000 in 2003) and LAP Head Start (\$25,000 in 2003), plus support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The program has incurred costs in neighborhood clean-ups for which Urban Development funds have been budgeted (\$400), though costs have not yet been submitted for reimbursement.

What other resources made the project possible? Funds? Materials? Labor?

- A community tool shed, funded through an Antelope Valley EDI grant and maintained by City Parks & Recreation, has been a very useful resource.
- Urban Development Department's Tree Management Program has been useful for removal or trimming of dead or dangerous trees.
- Private donations from landlords (business and residential)
- Community volunteers

Who benefitted?

Visible improvements have been made on at least half of the 90+ properties; over 40 junk cars have been removed (including one with a mobile drug dealership); and a "chop shop" was shut down.

What was innovative about the project?

Lincoln is one of 15 local sites across the country participating in Free To Grow, which is a Head Start-based national demonstration program. One of the best practice models suggested by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was a Vallejo, California model for neighborhood revitalization. This Vallejo model uses an environmental approach to promote strong families and safe communities. This model is also unique in its collaborative approach to making improvements in the physical environment along with concurrent development of human and social capital. This is the model that partners in Lincoln chose to use. Representatives from most of Lincoln's participating organizations visited Vallejo to see that model in action and to receive technical assistance for local adaptation. Partners brought back the concepts developed and successfully implemented in approximately 20 Vallejo neighborhoods and adapted them specifically for Lincoln.